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AUTHOR Willis, Joe D.; And Others
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine if power, fear of failure, and achievement motive scores could predict athletes' self ratings and coaches' ratings of athletes' competitiveness. Subjects were 33 male and 10 female members of volleyball, basketball, track and field, and cross country university athletic teams. Athletes answered Form B of the Sports Attitudes Inventory, a sport-specific instrument designed to measure three competition related motives. Subjects then rated themselves on competitiveness, and coaches' ratings of athletes' competitiveness were obtained. Results of a step wise regression analysis revealed that coaches' ratings of the athletes' skills were the most important predictors of the coaches' competitiveness ratings. Self-peer ratings of competitiveness and power motive scores were also important predictive variables. Results confirmed earlier findings with female high schol athletes with respect to the relationship between coaches' perceptions of competitiveness and skill. Power was found to be the best of the three motives in predicting coaches' ratings of competitiveness, and fear was found to be the next most frequent motive. (Authors/FG)

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMPETITIVE MOTIVES AND RATINGS OF COMPETITIVENESS

Joe D. Willis and Benjamin Layne, Georgia State University

Roger S. Moffat, Georgia Institute of Technology

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Running head: Ratings of Competitiveness and Competitive Motives

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine if power, fear of failure, and achievement motive scores predicted self ratings and coaches' ratings of competitiveness. Subjects were members of four (4) university varsity athletic teams who answered Form B of the Sports Attitude Inventory which is a sport specific instrument designed to measure three competition-related motives. Subjects rated themselves on competitiveness based upon the construct as explained by the investigator. Coaches' ratings of competitiveness were also obtained. Coaches' ratings of competitiveness correlated .66 with skill ratings, .28 with self ratings of competitiveness, and -.37 with fear of failure. Coaches' ratings of skill correlated -.48 with fear of failure. Results of a step wise regression analysis revealed that coaches' rating of skill was the most important predictor of the coaches' competitiveness ratings. Self-peer ratings of competitiveness and power motive scores were also important predictive variables. Results confirmed earlier findings with high school athletes with respect to the relationship between coaches' perceptions of competitiveness and skill. Results lend support to validation claims for the measures of power motive, fear of failure, and the achievement motive.

Relationship Between Competitive Motives and Ratings of Competitiveness

In spite of the importance of competitive temperament to sport success, there have been relatively few attempts to measure this key variable. Berridge (1935) was the first to study competitiveness using effort expended in a strength task as a measure of competitive temperament. Booth (1958) selected items from the MMPI which proportedly discriminated between good and poor competitors. With two samples of athletes, 22 items were found to correlate .63 and .65 with coaches' ratings of competitive spirit. Two independent studies of football players and wrestlers failed to validate the Booth Scale (Kroll and Peterson, 1966; Rasch, Hunt and Robertson, 1961). More recently, three scales to measure competition-related motives were developed for use with athletes (Willis, 1982).

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between competitive motives and ratings of competitiveness. It was hypothesized that motive scores for power, achievement, and fear of failure would be important variables in predicting self ratings as well as coaches' ratings of competitiveness.

Method

Subjects were university students who were members of four varsity athletic teams. Of the total of 43 students, 33 were

male and 10 were female. The teams represented were volleyball, basketball, track and field and cross country. The three motive scales were administered in questionnaire form to subjects in groups. Subjects also rated themselves on competitiveness utilizing the self-peer ranking method (Holmes, 1971). The constructs of competitiveness and skill were explained to the head coaches who then rated each athlete on a scale of 1 to 7 on both dimensions. Ratings for skill and competitiveness were completely chosen independently of each other.

Results

Intercorrelations among the 6 variables are shown in Table 1. Significant correlations were found between coaches' ratings of competitiveness and skill ratings and fear of failure. Significant correlations were also found between self-peer ratings of competitiveness and coaches' ratings of competitiveness, skill and power motives.

Enter Table 1 about here

Two step-wise regression analyses were performed which used coaches' ratings and self-peer ratings of competitiveness as the criterion variables. Multiple correlations and beta weights are shown in Table 2. The multiple R for coaches' ratings of

competitiveness was .66 which accounted for 36.9 percent of the variance. For self-peer ratings of competitiveness, the multiple R was .57. The amount of variance in self-peer ratings explained by the predictor variables was 32.9 percent.

Enter Table 2 about here

For both criterion variables skill was found to be by far the best predictor variable. Of the motive scales, power contributed most significantly to the prediction of coaches' ratings of competitiveness. Achievement and fear of failure were the best motives in predicting self-peer ratings of competitiveness. The results appear to confirm the hypothesis that motive scores would be important predictors of competitiveness ratings. The results also support the construct validity of each of the motive scales.

Discussion

The results of this study confirmed the findings of an earlier study of high school female athletes with respect to the relationship between coaches' perceptions of competitiveness and skill. The relationship between self-peer ratings of competitiveness and skill was also replicated.

In this study power was found to be the best of the three motives in predicting coaches' ratings of competitiveness

followed closely by fear. In the previous study the opposite was found, that is, fear was the best predictor followed by power. Achievement motive was not a good predictor of coaches' ratings of competitiveness in either study. In the prediction of self-peer ratings of competitiveness, however, achievement was the best predictor followed by fear. This finding is different from the previous study in which fear and power were the best predictors. The differences in the results of the two studies were possibly due to the different levels of athletes in each of the studies. It is possible that there may be basic motivational differences between high school and university athletes. Another possible explanation may be that one sample was entirely female while the other was mostly male. Earlier studies, however, showed no significant sex differences in motive scores.

Since skill ratings seem to be important to ratings of competitiveness, it would be of interest in future studies to see if other measures of skill would be as effective. Several measures of skill used in combination might significantly improve the prediction of competitiveness. It would also be of interest in future studies to increase the number of motives studied. The addition of motives such as the need for affiliation might add significantly to the understanding of why athletes compete.

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Table 1

Correlation Coefficients Among Ratings of Competitiveness and Skill and Motive Scores

Variables	2	3	4	5	6
1. Self Peer Ratings of Competitiveness	.35	.28*	-.09	.43**	.13
2. Coach's Ratings of Competitivenss		.66**	-.37*	.18	.05
3. Coach's Ratings of Skill			-.48**	.13	.10
4. Fear Motives				-.13	-.01
5. Power Motives					.63**
6. Achievement Motives					

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

Table 2

Beta Weights and Multiple Correlation Coefficients
For Coaches' Ratings and Self Ratings of Competitiveness

Criterion Variables	Multiple Correlation	Beta Weights for Predictors					
		Skill	Power	Fear	NACH	Coach's Ratings	Self Peer Rating
Coach's Rating	.660	.564	.280	-.160	.081		.134
Self Peer Rating	.574	.476	.132	.268	-.386	.159	